

From the San Diego Union, July 12, 1971:

Chicano Cultural Center Open

500 Attracted By Festivities In Balboa Park

By Susan Harringer

Colorful dancing to authentic Mexican music and an art exhibit yesterday highlighted the opening of the Chicano Cultural Center in Balboa Park. The Toltecas en Aztlan, a Chicano artists' organization, sponsored the event which drew about 500 persons throughout the afternoon. Guillermo Aranda, chairman of the artists' group and master of ceremonies, told the crowd citizens should be proud of the new center. It is in an 80 foot-diameter water tank leased from the city.

'LOT OF WORK' "When I hear people say, 'Is this all they have?' I want them to know it took a lot of work," Aranda said. Aranda, 28, a student at San Diego State, worked with the Chicano Federation for three years to obtain the center. He said it is the only known Chicano center in the country housed in city facilities. "This is not something just for pleasure," Aranda said. "It is for awareness."

MEXICAN FOOD, TOO However, participants and spectators seemed to gain pleasure from the dancing and singing outside the building and more than 50 paintings and drawings inside. Mexican food was served.

The program consisted of the type of cultural activities planned at the center, formally known as Centro Cultural de la Raza. they included poetry reading, Ballet Folklorico en Aztlan and a Mexican combo with drums, guitars and castanets. Mrs. Delia Moreno of San Diego sang and played the guitar with her two daughters Chica, 15, and Maria, 16.

BEADED DRESSES They sang Ya Llegaron las Toltecas (The Toltecs Have Come) and were dressed in bright red, yellow and blue sequined and beaded dresses which Mrs. Moreno sewed. The Toltecs are members of the Nahuatlán people of central and southern Mexico. Mrs. Moreno will be a volunteer teacher this summer in music and bead work. Her daughters will assist her.

"The center has a very bright future," Mrs. Moreno said. It is because a lot of Mexican-American artists are helping us." Mrs. Moreno said she also will work with musicians in Tijuana and San Diego to get more musical instruments for the center.

MOSTLY VOLUNTEERS The center is operating on a skeleton budget and its 12 staff members are mostly volunteers. Aranda and another director will be paid \$800 a month by the San Diego Recreation and Parks Department during the summer.

When the water tank was transformed into the center early this year, the city spent \$19,880 and continues to pay water and electricity bills. The group pays \$1 a year to the city and receives limited funds from the United Community Services and Economic Opportunities Commission. Aranda said the Toltecas en Aztlan expect to get more city, county and state funds.

In a year, activities such as music, dancing, arts and crafts, graphics, sculpture and kitchen workshops will be in full operation, Aranda said. A child-care center also has been proposed. "In five years, we expect to have our own building, Aranda said.

The tank, although spartan in appearance, was brightened by paintings.

CANVAS MURAL Mario Acevedo, 24, talked about his 7-by-12-foot canvas mural, "Birth." "It's related to culture," said the San Diego State student. The mural, as many of the center's works of art, signifies "La Raza" or the Chicano movement, he said. His oil painting included a man with a machete and two eagles devouring a rattlesnake, a symbol in Peru's Inca and Mexican Aztec culture.

Paintings are donated by Mexican-American artists of all ages, and are not for sale. Aranda said the center eventually will sell paintings and handicrafts. The artists also plan to paint the tank's interior with murals of Mexican culture in San Diego.



Youngsters, from left, Araceli Silva, Ava Avalos, Veronica Ensué dance Ballet Folklorico at Chicano Cultural Center in Balboa Park.

Chicano Cultural Center Opening Attracts 500

(Continued)
Americans artists are helping us."
Mrs. Moreno said she also will work with musicians in Tijuana and San Diego to get more musical instruments for the center.
MOSTLY VOLUNTEERS
The center is operating on skeleton budget and its 12 staff members are mostly volunteers.
Aranda and another director will be paid \$80 a month by the San Diego Recreation and Parks Department during the summer.
When the water tank was transformed into the center, the city spent \$12,888 and continues to pay water and electricity bills.
The group pays \$1 a year to the city and receives limited man with a machete and two birds from the United Commissions Services and Economic Opportunities Commission.
Aranda said the Toltecans en

Artists expect to get more city, county and state funds.
In a year, activities such as music, dancing, arts and crafts, graphics, sculpture and kitchen workshops will be in full operation, Aranda said. A child-care center also has been proposed.
"In five years, we expect to have our own building," Aranda said.
The tank, although spartan in appearance, was brightened by paintings.
CANVAS MURAL
Mario Acevedo, 24, talked about his 7-by-12-foot canvas mural, "Birth."
"It's related to culture," said the San Diego State student.
The mural, as many of the center's works of art, signifies "La Raza" or the Chicano movement, he said.
His oil painting included a man with a machete and two eagles devouring a rattlesnake, a symbol in Peru's Inca and Mexican Aztec culture.
Paintings are donated by

Chicano Cultural Center Open

500 Attracted By Festivities In Balboa Park

By SUSAN HARRIGER

Colorful dancing to authentic Mexican music and an art exhibit yesterday highlighted the opening of the Chicano Cultural Center in Balboa Park.
The Toltecans en Aztlan, a Chicano artists' organization, sponsored the event which drew about 500 persons throughout the afternoon.
Guillermo Aranda, chairman of the artists' group and master of ceremonies, told the crowd citizens should be proud of the new center. It is in an 80-foot-diameter water tank, leased from the city.

LOT OF WORK
"When I hear people say, 'Is this all they have?' I want them to know it took a lot of work," Aranda said.
Aranda, 24, a student at San Diego State, worked with the Chicano Federation for three years to obtain the center.
He said it is the only known Chicano center in the country housed in city facilities.
"This is not something just for pleasure," Aranda said. "It is for awareness."

MEXICAN FOOD, TOO
However, participants and spectators seemed to gain pleasure from the dancing and singing outside the building and more than 50 paintings and drawings inside. Mexican food was served.
The program consisted of the type of cultural activities planned at the center, formerly known as Centro Cultural de la Raza. They included poetry reading, Ballet Folklorico en Aztlan and a Mexican cumbia with drums, guitars and castanets.

Mrs. Della Moreno of San Diego sang and played the guitar with her two daughters, China, 11, and Maria, 16.

BEADED DRESSES
They sang Ya Llegaron las Toltecans (The Toltecans Have Come) and were dressed in bright red, yellow and blue sequined and beaded dresses, which Mrs. Moreno sewed. The Toltecans are members of the Nahuatl people of central and southern Mexico.

Mrs. Moreno will be a volunteer teacher this summer in music and bead work. Her daughters will assist her.

"The center has a very bright future," Mrs. Moreno said. "It is because a lot of Mexican."

(Continued on B-3, Col. 1)

The San Diego Union, July 12, 1971, page B-5.

(The San Diego Union)

The San Diego Union, July 12, 1971, page B-1.

(The San Diego Union)